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UNDOUBTEDLY the one text of Scripture that is oftenest referred to as proof of the millennium and the conversion of the world, is that one which speaks of the nations beating their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. There are two places in the Bible where these words are used,—*Isaiah 2:2-4* and *Micah 4:1-5*. These are almost precisely alike, except that where one uses the word “nations” the other uses “people,” and the statement in Micah is a little longer than that in Isaiah. That the reader may have the full benefit of the text and this discussion of it, we here print it in full.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.1*

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.”*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.2*

Now let us examine this closely and see what it teaches. When is this scripture to apply?—“In the last days.” Who is it that shall say these things?—“Many nations [Isa., “Many *people*”] shall come and

say;" etc. Exactly! In the last days then *many people* shall say that "the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." In the last days many people shall say, The nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks." In the last days many people shall say that "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." In the last days many people shall say, "Peace and safety," because "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid." And, too, they will say that "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." All these things *many people* will say in the last days.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.3*

But what saith the Lord? "In that day, *saith the Lord*, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even forever." *Verses 6, 7*. This shows that at the very time—*in that day*—when "many people" are saying all those things, there will be some who will be "driven out," "afflicted," and "cast off," and that these will be a "remnant." And it is this "remnant" which the Lord says he will gather and over whom he will reign in Mount Zion forever.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.4*

This is clearly against the idea of the conversion and gathering of all the world, for if that were true then there would be no "remnant" at all, nor would there be any that were "cast off" or "driven out" or "afflicted." How could there be any afflicted or driven out when every man could sit under his vine and under his fig-tree, with none to make afraid, and when none should ever learn war any more? Plainly there could not be. Therefore the text does not at all teach that there shall be a millennium of peace and safety and the conversion of the world. It only teaches that in the last days many nations or people will say so, and *will say* that the Lord has said it; while the Lord himself says that "in that day" there will be a remnant, who will be cast off, driven out, and afflicted, and that this remnant he will gather, and will reign over them in Mount Zion forever.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.5*

That this is the true explanation of the text we have the whole Bible on this subject in proof.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.6*

1. Let us follow this “remnant” and see what further is said about it. In *Joel 2:30, 31*, the Lord says: “I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.” And in *verse 32* he says that “there shall be deliverance” “in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” And in *Zephaniah 3:8* we read: “Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.” Can it be possible that the Lord is going to assemble a converted world to pour upon such a people all his fierce anger? Not at all. The word of God knows no such thing as the conversion of the world, that is all. The prophet proceeds (*verse 12*): “I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.” This is precisely what *the Lord* says in *Micah 4*, while many people are saying “Peace and safety,” and that the world shall be converted. This is further shown by the next verse. It speaks of this afflicted and poor people as the “remnant of Israel,” saying, “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.” This whole connection shows that the time here spoken of is the same as that in *Micah 4*, and that the remnant here referred to is the same as the remnant there referred to, and that this remnant will be poor and afflicted, cast off and driven out.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.7*

This is confirmed by another reference to this remnant. *Revelation 12:17*, says: “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The dragon is said, in *verse 9*, to be “the devil,” “Satan.” The “woman” is the church of God. The devil is wroth with the church of God, and goes to make war with the remnant of her seed. The devil works through earthly powers and agencies. In stirring up kings,

and people, and nations to oppress the church he has ever endeavored to destroy her. This is continued even to the end, in a war with the remnant of Israel, the last of the church of God. Says the Lord by Daniel, speaking of that great power that so long wore out the saints of the Most High. “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” *Daniel 7:21, 22*.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 316.8*

Here, then, is the story of the remnant. It is the last of the church. The people who compose it keep “the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The devil, through the powers of earth, makes war upon them. By this they are “cast off” “driven out,” and become an afflicted, and poor people. But there is deliverance in the remnant who the Lord calls, for, “In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even forever.” “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.” *Revelation 15:2*. Those who got this victory are they who kept “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus;” and these are the remnant, who are driven out and afflicted, but whom the Lord gather, and over whom he reigns in Mount Zion forever.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.1*

Yet at the very time when the devil is thus making war upon the poor, afflicted, but loyal remnant of the church of Christ, the popular pulpit, and the worldly church, will sing of peace and safety and the conversion of the world, and will think that because the world finds it to its interest to ally itself with the already too willing church, therefore the world is becoming converted, and a millennium of peace will reign on the earth! Right here the reader may with profit read carefully the whole of the second chapter of Isaiah. It is too long to quote here.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.2*

There is another line of scriptures that also prove positively that this

promise of peace and safety, and of beating swords into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, is only the saying of "many people" and not of the Lord at all. Notice, the time at which the prophet says that many people will say these things, is "in the last days." Now what does the Lord say shall be the condition of things in the last days? This:—*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.3*

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." *2 Timothy 3:1-5*.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.4*

This is what God says there will be, in the last days; and this is exactly what now is, as any one can see who will look. Nor is there promise of these bad men growing better and better, until all shall be converted and there be left none wicked on the earth. On the contrary, this word says "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." *2 Timothy 3:13*. And in the face of these plain positive declarations of the word of God, pulpit and platform, priests and people, will declare that the world is growing better, that everything prospers and is on the highway to the millennium. It is too, but not such a millennium as they are looking for and preaching, but one of destruction and devastation.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.5*

Again, Says the Lord by the prophet Joel, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great." *Joel 3:13*. When is the harvest?—"The harvest is the end of the world." *Matthew 13:39*.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.6*

Who holds the sickle to reap withal?—"I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time

is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." *Revelation 14:14-16*.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.7*

This is the time, and the event, that is spoken of by Joel, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe"—the end of the world is come. And when that time comes, the word of God says, "*Their wickedness is great*." Therefore any preaching that promises a reign of righteousness on this earth before the end of the world, is contrary to the word of God. What further says the Lord, of this time? This:—*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.8*

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles [nations]; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up; beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about; thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord." *Joel 3:9-11*.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.9*

Then he continues in *verse 13*, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe," etc. Therefore the word of God is plain that the promises of peace and of the increase of righteousness, that will be heard in the last days, are only the words of many people, and not the word of God; of a people too, who are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God," and who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof; and from whom it is the duty of all who fear God, to turn away.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.10*

When this people say, Peace and safety, God says there shall be "fear, and the pit, and the snare," and "sudden destruction" upon the inhabitants of the earth. When they say, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," the Lord says, "Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up." When they say that "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks," the word of God says, "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears." When they shall say that the world is growing better and better, know of a surety that God says,

“Evil men and seducers shall wax *worse and worse*.” When they speak of the time when the world shall be converted, God says that at that time, “their wickedness is great.”*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.11*

We are now living in the last days, in the very time when many people are saying all these things that are directly contrary to the word of God; and not only that, but are said contrary to that word, in the very presence of the evil times and events that the word of God shows shall be. From such turn away, for whoever trusts in such promises of peace and safety, and follows in the way of such words shall not know peace. For the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. “Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.” *Joel 2:12, 13*.*SITI December 28, 1891, page 117.12*